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PAGE 01

NC 33618

TOR1050128Z AUG 75

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO USDEL SALT TWO GENEVA IMMEDIATE 3350  
BT

SECRET STATE 184170

EXDIS/SALT

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3

TAGS: PARM

SUBJECT: STATEMENT ON BACKFIRE

REF: SALT TWO - 708 (SALT TWO GENEVA 266)

1. CONCUR WITH DRAFT LANGUAGE ALONG THE LINES CONTAINED  
IN PARA. 2 REFTEL WITH FOLLOWING SUGGESTED CHANGES:  
"A. TURNING NOW TO HEAVY BOMBERS, WE NOTE THAT THERE IS  
AGREEMENT THAT COUNTING ANY FUTURE BOMBER IN THE 2400  
AGGREGATE WILL BE MADE ON A CASE-BY-CASE BASIS BY COMPARING  
THAT BOMBER WITH OTHER BOMBERS ALREADY INCLUDED IN THE  
AGGREGATE. IT IS IMPORTANT, HOWEVER, THAT WE UNDERSTAND  
HOW SUCH COMPARISONS WILL BE MADE. WE BELIEVE THAT THE  
PRINCIPAL CRITERION FOR SUCH COMPARISONS SHOULD BE THE  
BOMBER'S OPERATIONAL CAPABILITY. AMONG THE MOST IMPORTANT  
ELEMENTS WHICH DETERMINE THIS CAPABILITY ARE THE FACTORS  
OF PAYLOAD AND INTERCONTINENTAL RANGE.

"B. SUCH A COMPARISON CAN BE MADE IN THE CASE OF BACKFIRE.  
IT HAS RANGE/PAYLOAD CAPABILITIES COMPARABLE TO THOSE OF  
AIRCRAFT WHICH BOTH SIDES AGREE ARE HEAVY BOMBERS. DATA  
AVAILABLE FROM NATIONAL TECHNICAL MEANS INDICATE THAT  
BACKFIRE, UNREFUELED, CAN CARRY A PAYLOAD OF ABOUT 10  
METRIC TONS TO A RANGE OF 10,000 KILOMETERS.

"C. IN HIS JULY 9 ELABORATION OF THE SOVIET POSITIONS,  
GENERAL BELETSKY ASSERTED THAT THE U.S. POSITION ON  
BACKFIRE WAS BASED IN PART ON ITS AIR REFUELING CAPABILITY.  
I WOULD LIKE TO EMPHASIZE THAT THE COMPARISONS I HAVE JUST  
MADE SHOW THAT BACKFIRE'S (BEGIN UNDERLINE) UNREFUELED  
(END UNDERLINE) RANGE/PAYLOAD CAPABILITY IS COMPARABLE  
TO THAT OF BOMBERS WHICH BOTH SIDES HAVE AGREED TO COUNT  
IN THE 2400 AGGREGATE.

"D. IF ONE CHOOSES TO COMPARE EXTERNAL CHARACTERISTICS  
OF A NEW BOMBER, SUCH AS THE BACKFIRE, WITH THOSE OF OTHER  
AIRCRAFT AGREED BY BOTH SIDES TO BE HEAVY BOMBERS, IT  
MUST BE REMEMBERED THAT TECHNOLOGICAL IMPROVEMENTS SUCH

SECRET

State Dept. review completed

EYES ONLY

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AS ADVANCED FUSELAGE DESIGNS, VARIABLE GEOMETRY WINGS, LIGHTER MATERIALS, AND IMPROVED ENGINES PERMIT THE DEVELOPMENT OF SMALLER BOMBERS WITH CAPABILITIES EQUAL TO OR GREATER THAN THOSE OF OLDER DESIGN HEAVY BOMBERS CURRENTLY IN SERVICE. THEREFORE, THE TREND IN HEAVY BOMBERS IS TOWARD SMALLER SIZE. FOR EXAMPLE, THE BACKFIRE IS APPROXIMATELY 20 PERCENT SMALLER AND LIGHTER IN WEIGHT THAN THE BISON, AND SIMILARLY, THE B-1 IS APPROXIMATELY 20 PERCENT SMALLER/LIGHTER THAN THE B-52." INGERSOLL

Approved For Release 2008/03/03 : CIA-RDP80T00294A001200010009-1